

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SNM-02 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 EB-11 DRC-01 /159 W

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R 091145Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8156

INFO AMEMBAMSSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

N/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 4571

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

DIA

DEA HQS

CINCPAC

USSAG NKP

13TH ADVON UDORN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 17555

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJECT: PRIORITIES OF THE SANYA GOVERNMENT

CINCPAC FOR POALD

REF: A. BANGKOK 16271, B. BANGKOK 17194

SUMMARY: HAVING SUCCEEDED IN

ITS INITIAL GOAL OF RESTORING PUBLIC

ORDER AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF THE THANOM GOVERNMENT, THE GOVERNMENT

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OF PRIME MINISTER SANYA THAMMASAK IS NOW CNCENTRATING ON OTHER

PROBLEMS. FIRST PRIORITY IS THE PROMULGATION OF A NEW CONSTITUTION AND THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS. OTHER PRIORITIES NOW EMERGING INCLUDE DISESTABLISHING THE FORMER LEADERS' POWER, CONTROLLING INFLATION, REFORMING THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND CREATING AN IMAGE OF RESPONSIVENESS. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING HIS APPOINTMENT AS PRIME MINISTER OCTOBER 14, SANYA THAMMASAK'S FIRST PRIORITIES WERE TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT AND TO RESTORE PUBLIC ORDER. THESE GOALS HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, AND THE SANYA GOVERNMENT IS NOW TURNING TO OTHER PRIORITIES.

2. CONSTITUTION AND ELECTIONS: AMONG THE KEY ISSUES WHICH BROUGHT DOWN THE THANOM GOVERNMENT WAS THE DELAY OF THE LONG-AWAITED CONSTITUTION. WHEN APPOINTED PRIME MINISTER, SANYA PROMISED THAT A CONSTITUTION WOULD BE PROMULGATED WITHIN SIX MONTHS, AND THAT NATIONAL ELECTIONS WOULD FOLLOW. THE GOVERNMENT HAS APPOINTED A COMMITTEE OF DISTINGUISHED THAI TO DRAFT THE NEW CONSTITUTION. ONCE THE CONSTITUTION IS COMPLETED, THE NEXT PRIORITIES WILL BE LAWS ON ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL PARTIES. THE SANYA GOVERNMENT REGARDS ITSELF AS A CARETAKER GOVERNMENT WHOSE MAIN MISSION IS PREPARING THE WAY FOR AN ELECTED GOVERNMENT UNDER THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

3. DISESTABLISHING THE TRIO'S POWER: RESPONDING TO PUBLIC PRESSURE, ESPECIALLY FROM STUDENTS, THE SANYA GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN A SERIES OF STEPS TO ELIMINATE THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INFLUENCE OF THE THREE EXILED LEADERS (THANOM, PRAPHAT, AND NARONG). THESE MEASURES INCLUDE: A FREEZE OF THE TRIO'S ASSETS AND AN INVESTIGATION OF THE SOURCES OF THEIR WEALTH; PLANNED ABOLITION OF THE SUPREME COMMAND; ABOLITION OF THE BOARD OF INVESTIGATION AND FOLLOW-UP OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS (BIFGO), WHICH NARONG HAD USED AS A STEPPING STONE TO POLITICAL POWER; THE STRIPPING OF NARONG'S MILITARY RANK; REMOVAL OF NARONG'S FRIENDS FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT; AND A REVIEW OF THE DECREES OF THE SARIT AND THANOM GOVERNMENTS.

4. CONTROLLING INFLATION: THE SANYA GOVERNMENT'S GREATEST ECONOMIC PROBLEM IS CONTROLLING INFLATION (SEE REF B). SANYA'S FIRST "MEET THE PEOPLE" TELEVISION APPEARANCE NOVEMBER 2 CONCENTRATED ON GOVERNMENT PLANS TO END THE RICE PROBLEM AND REDUCE PRICES. THE GOVERNMENT IS ALSO GIVING ATTENTION TO THE RISING PRICE OF CRUDE OIL.

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5. REFORMING THE POLICE DEPARTMENT: THE NEW DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE THAI NATIONAL POLICE DEPARTMENT (TNPd), GENERAL PRACHUAB SUNTHARANGKUL, HAS ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION TO CLEAN UP THE DEPARTMENT. ALTHOUGH PREVIOUS TNPd DIRECTORS GENERAL PROCLAIMED THE SAME GOAL AND NEVER ACHIEVED PERCEPTIBLE SUCCESS, PRACHUAB IS MAKING A SINCERE EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE TNPd'S PUBLIC IMAGE BY REPLACING CORRUPT OR INEFFECTIVE POLICE OFFICIALS WITH MEN OF GOOD REPUTATION.

HE HAS FORBIDDEN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW MASSAGE PARLORS AND NIGHT CLUBS, WHICH HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO POLICE CORRUPTION IN BANGKOK. PRACHUAB HAS ALSO PLEDGED TO ELIMINATE NARCOTICS FROM THAILAND.

6. CREATING AN IMAGE OF RESPONSIVENESS: THE SANYA GOVERNMENT IS ATTEMPTING TO CREATE AN IMAGE OF RESPONSIVENESS TO POPULAR DEMANDS. SANYA PLANS ADDITIONAL "MEET THE PEOPLE" TELEVISION APPEARANCES WITH INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBERS TO BRING THE GOVERNMENT CLOSER TO THE PEOPLE. THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAS REMOVED UNPOPULAR OFFICIALS AND IS ACTING ON PROBLEMS THAT SEEM TO CONCERN PEOPLE MOST.

7. COMMENT: THE SANYA GOVERNMENT SEES ITSELF AS IN INTERIM GOVERNMENT UNTIL AN ELECTED BODY TAKES ITS PLACE. IT IS NOT INCLINED TO TAKE MAJOR INITIATIVES IN FOREIGN OR DOMESTIC POLICIES, BUT IT IS SCRAMBLING TO COPE WITH THE MAJOR PROBLEMS OF IMMEDIATE CONCERN.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, GOVERNMENT REFORM, CONSTITUTION, CIVIL DISORDERS, MILITARY GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BANGKO17555
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731145/aaaabgwq.tel
Line Count: 133
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. BANGKOK 16271, B. BANGKOK 17194
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21-Nov-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <26-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRIORITIES OF THE SANYA GOVERNMENT CINCPAC FOR POALD
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH, (SANYA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005